

Message Text

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ACTION AGR-20

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FRB-03 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2180

INFO USLO PEKING

UNCLAS HONG KONG 10112

FOR AGRICULTURE, FAS, NOVOTNY, GRAIN AND FEED DIV
FROM AGRICULTURAL OFFICER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR CH

SUBJECT: PRC EARLY RICE CROP A NEW RECORD

REF: HONG KONG 9704

1. HONG KONG TA KUNG PAO AND WEN HUI PAO OF SEPTEMBER 11, QUOTING CHINA NEWS SERVICE (CNS) OF SEPTEMBER 10, CLAIMED CHINA'S EARLY RICE CROP REACHED NEW HIGH IN BOTH PRODUCTION AND AVERAGE YIELD. ELEVEN OF THIRTEEN EARLY RICE-PRODUCING AREAS REPORTED INCREASES OVER 1973, WHILE TWO REMAINING PROVINCES, KIANGSU AND KWEICHOW, EXPERIENCED SHORTFALLS BECAUSE OF NATURAL CALAMITIES.

2. CLAIMED INCREASES OVER 1973 RANGE FROM HIGH OF 40 PERCENT (SZECHWAN) TO LOW OF 5 PERCENT (HUNAN, KWANGSI-CHUANG AND ANHWEI). OTHER PROVINCIAL RESULTS, WITH PERCENTAGE-INCREASES IN PARENTHESES, AS FOLLOWS: YUNNAN (20); KWANGTUNG (13); AND UNCLASSIFIED

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HUPEH, KIANGSI AND FUKIEN (10). MINIMAL (2 PERCENT) INCREASES

ARE ESTIMATED FOR CHEKIANG AND SHANGHAI AND SHORTFALLS (COMPARED TO 1973) ARE ESTIMATED AT 15 PERCENT FOR KIANGSU AND 10 PERCENT FOR KWEICHOW.

3. COMMENT: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NOW AVAILABLE PERMITS EVEN MORE FAVORABLE ASSESSMENT THAN THAT IN REFTEL WHICH WAS BASED ON REPORTS FROM ONLY 8 EARLY RICE-PRODUCING PROVINCES ACCOUNTING FOR APPROXIMATELY 80 PERCENT OF AREA UNDER EARLY RICE. THAT ASSESSMENT RESULTED IN ESTIMATED INCREASE IN EARLY RICE PRODUCTION THIS YEAR OF SLIGHTLY MORE THAN 5 PERCENT (OR MORE THAN 2 MILLION METRIC TONS) ABOVE 1973 RECORD HARVEST.

4. WITH INCLUSION OF SZECHWAN'S 40-PERCENT INCREASE ON PERHAPS 4.5 PERCENT OF PLANTED AREA, LARGER INCREASE ON LARGER AREA THAN PREVIOUSLY ESTIMATED IN IMPORTANT KWANGTUNG AND POSITIVE RESULTS FROM CHEKIANG AND SHANGHAI (WITH CLOSE TO 9 PERCENT OF EARLY RICE AREA), REVISED ASSESSMENT INDICATES POSSIBLE INCREASE OF 8 PERCENT ABOVE 1973.

5. ESTIMATED QUANTITY-INCREASE (USING 8 PERCENT) ON BASIS OF OFFICIAL GRAIN PRODUCTION CLAIMS FOR 1973, WOULD BE IN THE ORDER OF 4 MILLION METRIC TONS ABOVE 1973. BASED ON TRADITIONALLY ACCEPTED LEVEL OF 100-105 MILLION-TON TOTAL RICE CROP, HOWEVER, THAT 8-PERCENT INCREASE WOULD MEAN AN INCREASE OF APPROXIMATELY 3 MILLION TONS ABOVE 1973. IN EITHER CASE, INCREASE IS IMPRESSIVE.
CROSS

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